

Conference Abstract

# Documenting Biodiversity in Underrepresented Languages using Crowdsourcing

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## Abstract

Biodiversity is the variety of life on Earth, and it is essential for our planet's health and well-being. Language is also a powerful medium for documenting and preserving cultural heritage, including knowledge about biodiversity. However, many indigenous and underrepresented languages are at risk of disappearing, taking with them valuable information about local ecosystems. Also, many species are at risk of extinction, and much of our knowledge about biodiversity is in underrepresented languages. (Cardoso et al. 2019). This can make it challenging to document and protect biodiversity, as well as to share this knowledge with others.

Crowdsourcing is a way to collect information from a large number of people, and it can be a valuable tool for documenting biodiversity in underrepresented languages. By crowdsourcing, leveraging the *iNaturalist* platform, and volunteer contributors in the open movement including the Dagbani<sup>\*1</sup> and Igbo<sup>\*2</sup> Wikimedian communities, we can reach people who have knowledge about local biodiversity, but who may not have been able to share this knowledge before. For instance, the Dagbani and Igbo Wikimedia contributors did not have enough content on biodiversity data until they received education about the need. This can help us to fill in the gaps in our knowledge about biodiversity, and to protect species that are at risk of extinction.

In this presentation, we will discuss the use of crowdsourcing to document biodiversity in underrepresented languages, the challenges and opportunities of using crowdsourcing for this purpose, and some examples of successful projects. We will also discuss the importance of sharing knowledge about biodiversity with others and share some ideas on how to do this.

We believe that crowdsourcing has the potential to be a powerful tool for documenting biodiversity in underrepresented languages. By working together, we can help protect our planet's biodiversity and ensure that this knowledge is available to future generations.

## **Keywords**

local knowledge, cultural heritage, information loss, extinction, knowledge sharing, open knowledge

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## **Conflicts of interest**

The authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

## References

- Cardoso Y, Brancolinil F, Protogino L, Paracampo A, Bogan S, Posadas P, Montoya-Burgos J (2019) An integrated approach clarifies the cryptic diversity in *Hypostomus* Lacépède 1803 from the Lower La Plata Basin. *Anais da Academia Brasileira de Ciências* 91 (2). <https://doi.org/10.1590/0001-3765201920180131>

## Endnotes

- \*1 Dagbani Wikimedians User Group [https://meta.wikimedia.org/wiki/Dagbani\\_Wikimedians\\_User\\_Group](https://meta.wikimedia.org/wiki/Dagbani_Wikimedians_User_Group)
- \*2 Igbo Wikimedians User Group [https://meta.wikimedia.org/wiki/Igbo\\_Wikimedians\\_User\\_Group](https://meta.wikimedia.org/wiki/Igbo_Wikimedians_User_Group)